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TAGS: [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [RU](#)
SUBJECT: RUSSIANS PUT THEATER MISSILE DEFENSE COOPERATION
ON HOLD

Classified By: Ambassador Victoria Nuland for reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) In a brief October 1 letter (emailed to EUR/PRM), Russian Senior Military Representative Valentin Kuznetsov informed the NATO International Staff (IS) that Russian MOD representatives will not take part in the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) Theater Missile Defense (TMD) Computer Assisted Exercise (CAX 2007) planned for November 7-16 in Ottobrun, Germany. Kuznetsov offered no explanation, but held out the possibility of rescheduling the exercise.

¶2. (C) Germany, the host nation, is consulting with Berlin which has been planning it for almost a year, but told us that "rescheduling is not so easy." The German NRC representative noted that without Russian participation, the next step would be to cancel the final planning meeting (Nov. 8-9). He expressed frustration because "Germany invested a lot of money and energy in this event." The IS does not believe the exercise can or will be rescheduled and "this effectively puts an end to the possibility of future cooperation in TMD and destroys six years of work."

¶3. (C) COMMENT: Once considered the flagship of NRC cooperation, the TMD project is now at a stand-still, firmly caught in the jaws of the larger missile defense (MD) debate and the Russian political cycle. Russia has also stalled the kick-off of the next phase of NRC TMD cooperation (i.e., development of a prototype to link Russian and NATO TMD systems). So far at NATO, the Russians have been unequivocal that NATO (and the U.S. bilaterally) must choose between MD in the Czech Republic and Poland or TMD cooperation with Russia. Now they have acted on it. End comment.
NULAND